

For Such a Time as This

A study in the book of Esther

Lesson Eight

“The Tables are Turned”

Prayerfully read through Esther, chapter eight

Our chapter begins by informing us that on that same day..... the day that Haman was hanged.... King Ahasuerus gives to Esther the house of Haman. These facts tell us that Haman has been hung as a criminal, and the law ruled that the property of all criminals put to death were given to the king, not to any of the criminal's family members or beneficiaries. Not only has all that Haman worked for and acquired done nothing for him in the end, but all that he had has neither benefited his family or future descendants.

1) As we consider these facts, look up and record the following Scriptures:

Job 27:16-17 -

Psalm 39:6 -

Psalm 52:7 -

Proverbs 13:22 -

2) What warning does Jesus give to us in **Mark 4:18-19** about the seed sown among thorns?

3) Is this something you struggle with? How would you apply that warning to your own life?

- 4) Looking back at the second half of **Esther 8:1**, what other facts do we learn from this verse?

- 5) The king was already grateful to Mordecai and had honored him for his part in protecting the king from assassination. Now, upon learning that Mordecai is also related to his queen, what more does King Ahasuerus do for Mordecai according to **verse 2**?

- 6) What does Esther do according to the last half of that verse?

- 7) So, now we see that all of Haman's wealth, which included not only his property, but all of his possessions, has gone to Esther, and his position of power and influence has been given to Mordecai. Just as we read in **Job 27:17**, Mordecai now "wears" what was on Haman's finger. How does this "act of God's justice" encourage your heart as you look at the seeming "injustices" all around us?

- 8) Mordecai's enemy, and the enemy of his people may now be dead, but the edict he put in place still stands. Knowing this, Esther once again puts her life on the line to go before the king without a summons, as she petitions him for her people. This second time, she approaches him much different than she did the first time. What do we learn from **verse 3** about the way Esther comes before the king? Describe her actions.

9) **Verse 4** tells us that the king once again holds out the golden scepter to her and she comes before him with her petition. **Summarize** from **verses 5 and 6** Esther's petition to the king.

10) How does the king respond to Esther's request, according to **verses 7 & 8**?

11) The king reminds Esther in **verse 8**, that any decree sealed with the king's signet ring cannot be revoked, but he has given Mordecai the power to write a new decree, also sealed with the king's signet ring, to help protect the Jewish people from annihilation. Looking at **verse 11**, write down the decree that Mordecai sends out.

Verse 9 shows us that no time was wasted before the king sent for the scribes to write down the decree that Mordecai would put forth. This happened, we are told, in the **third month**, which is the month of Sivan, equivalent approximately around the month of June or July on our calendar. The month the first decree was to be carried out was the **twelfth month** of Adar, around March on our calendar, so there were about 8 months between the two dates.

12) What are the details given to us in **verses 13 & 14** that show us the urgency to get this new decree to the people?

- 13) What is the reason for this urgency, given to us in the last part of **verse 13**?
- 14) Look back at **Esther 3:15**. What does this verse tell us about the people's reaction in the city of Shushan after the first decree had been sent out?
- 15) As we look at **Esther 8:15**, how do the people of Shushan respond to this new turn of events?
- 16) What do we read in **Proverbs 11:10** that bears witness to this?
- 17) There were, I'm sure, exceptions, but what does this tell you about the overall feeling of the people regarding the Jews living side by side with them?
- 18) Do you see examples in our society today, where the feelings of the general population are being misrepresented by a strong and vocal minority? Share your thoughts.

- 19) What do we read in **Esther 8:16** about the **Jews reaction** to this new decree?
- 20) They surely felt “light” after this dark cloud of certain doom had been lifted. We can understand that this new decree gave them a fighting chance for survival, therefore filling them with gladness and joy. What I find most interesting is the word **honor**. Looking back at **verse 15**, share what you think may have given them a feeling, or great sense of “honor.”
- 21) Reading from **verse 17** record how the Jewish people **celebrated** this new turn of events.
- 22) The second half of **verse 17** reveals a very interesting reaction from many of the people of the land. What does it say happened?
- 23) Commentator Matthew Henry states: “**They plainly saw in Haman's fate that, if any offered injury to the Jews, it was at their peril; and therefore, for their own security, they joined themselves to them.**” What are your thoughts on the reason(s) this may have occurred?

24) Just as the Jewish people in Esther's time, we have been given a victory over a fate of certain death. But although we've been saved from annihilation and the decree that was once against us, we still have an enemy in this world we must contend with. Our salvation is **certain**, but we have not yet experienced the **fullness** of that salvation. What does **Ephesians 6:12** tell us about this enemy?

25) Like the Jewish people in the Book of Esther, we have been given the means to protect ourselves from the attacks of this enemy. What does **2 Corinthians 10:3 & 4** tell us about the weapons God has provided us in this war?

26) From **Ephesians 6:14-18** list the pieces of this heavenly armor we've been given.

27) Read **Romans 8:31-34**. How do these verses encourage you in the daily battles we face in this life?

28) What would you say was your greatest take-away from Lesson 8?